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SOC. 4.01.2 CIA: The
Myth of the Madness
Secret History of

The Intelligence Field

Better to Heed Those Who Invented the Game

The OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency. R. Harris Smith. University of California Press. 458 pages; illustrated; index; \$10.95

CIA: The Myth and the Madness. Patrick McGarvey. Saturday Review Press. 240 pages; \$6.95

Men of Intelligence. Gen. Sir Kenneth Strong. St. Martin's Press. 183 pages; illustrated; index; \$6.95

Forecast for Overlord. J. M. Stagg. W. W. Norton & Co. 128 pages; illustrated; maps; \$5.95

What these otherwise dissimilar books have in common is the subject of intelligence. In terms of their appeal to general readers they range from the extreme of *CIA: The Myth & the Madness*, which is written for the mob, to *Forecast for Overlord*, a work of interest primarily to specialists. The other two fall in between, *Men of Intelligence* being a very solid study written by a real authority, and *OSS* being a work that defies quick characterization.

Let's take the last one first.

OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency must be approached as a serious book produced by an important publisher. But its many shortcomings are apparent from the false notes of the title itself. It is inexcusable to herald this as "the secret history" of the OSS, particularly to have "secret" rendered on the book's burnt-yellow jacket as some artist's conception of a SECRET classification stamp, when the author quickly makes clear that he was denied access to "the classified OSS archives."

Certainly not a secret history, the book is not even history. The author calls himself an academic journalist. After an opening chapter on the creation of Maj. Gen. William J. ("Wild Bill"), Donovan's Office of Strategic Services, emphasis being on the personalities of "Donovan's Dreamers," the author devotes six chapters to OSS operations in the European Theater and three to its role in Asia. (Gen. Douglas MacArthur succeeded in excluding the OSS from the Pacific Theater.)

Mr. Smith's concluding chapter covers the evolution of the OSS into the Central Intelligence Agency, showing how the latter inherited the propensity for meddling in the affairs of foreign countries and stressing the conflict between the liberal and conserva-



Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan

tive factions of the CIA.

Professor Harold C. Deutsch points out in his History Book Club review of this book that "The handicap of not having access to OSS files obliges Mr. Smith to rely heavily on the testimony of some 200 individuals. In view of the thousands involved, this still means a hit-or-miss procedure through which some episodes stand out clearly while equally significant and dramatic ones are overlooked." The chapter on operations in Yugoslavia, the disorderly efforts of competing intelligence agencies to furnish the decision makers with appraisals of the competing guerrilla activities of Mihailovic and Tito is, in my opinion, the strongest of the chapters dealing with World War II.

If this were not a university press book I would overlook the journalistic shallowness, provincialism and lack of worldly wisdom reflected in this young author's writing. As a fair-minded military elder I can grit my teeth and bear the glib disapproval of "West Point formalities" and "old-line West Pointers," misuse of the term "shrapnel," reference to "military reserves" when the author obviously means "resources," speaking of "lines of combat" when he apparently means "combat lines," the grammatical error in quoting a line from a famous French song and identification of St-Cyr as "the French West Point" (the Ecole Polytechnique is much closer kin).

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"old-line" and fussy about "formalities." On the other hand, consider this bit of historical background-sketching: "But superior military power alone could not account for Germany's lightning victories" in 1940, the author solemnly informs us. "The French nation 'cracked morally,' and 'a new set of defeatist leaders sought to purchase the German's mercy. . . . High-ranking officers of the French Army, wealthy industrialists, and prominent politicians had 'ceased to believe in freedom, democracy, or any of the slogans which alone could galvanize the entire country.'" The passages quoted by Mr. Smith are from newspaper articles, granted, but what gibberish to include without comment in a work that purports to be reasonably scholarly!

Patrick J. McGarvey, author of *CIA: The Myth & the Madness*, is not trying to kid anybody about his credentials. "In the late 1940s and through the 1950s the agency recruited only at the Ivy League schools. Its junior-officer training program was designed solely for men with proper breeding. No Jew, Polack, Wop, Nigger, or Mick was in those classes. By the early 1960s, however, with the blossoming of intelligence into a conglomerate, the agency could no longer rely solely on the very best schools . . . so it broadened the character of its recruitment. Under those 'lowered standards' it got guys like myself."

So after 14 years, Mr. McGarvey left the CIA. He does not say why, and although the author reveals little specific biographical data, they can be ascertained from scattered bits of information in his book that he did not resign to write this exposé. ("I've been away from intelligence three years and I still get those wormy feelings in my intestines if I think too long about the security angle of writing about it.") Nor did he leave to take other employment. ("I walked the sidewalks for a time looking for honest work in the field of journalism.") If he left in protest I do not find this claim made in his book.

"The myth" of the CIA, according to the author, is that it is "an efficient, well-run machine capable of almost any act of trickery or intrigue." Everything it does, apparently, is "the madness."

"While I was writing this book," the author tells us in the first pages, "I was in touch with a good many guys still

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